RDI

RURAL INVESTMENT FUND

$$$$$$$$$ FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

November 7, 1995

TO: Elgin 2010 and Re:Union

From: Bruce Boggs and Constance Albrecht, Rural Development Initiatives, Inc:

RE: Meeting of Community Response Teams

Wednesday, November 15, 5:00 - 6:45 p.m.

Michrina's Restaurant (meeting room),
101 S. Main St. (at corner of Arch St.), Union

Dinner is optional; please RSVP to RDI at (541) 548-2013 ASAP.

Proposed Agenda: Discuss financial needs of **Elgin** and **Union** for hiring employees for their community response teams and to finance community projects. Discuss options such as communities pooling funds, and/or applying for a Rural Investment Fund grant.

The **Rural Investment Fund** is a new source of lottery money for rural communities; the money for your county will be distributed by your Regional Strategies Board, the Northeast Oregon Alliance. Strategies for tapping this new pot of money will be discussed. Please see enclosed information.

Please bring a list of your top three current priority community projects from your community's **Strategic Action Plan** with an up-to-date summary description and estimated cost for each project. Please bring a list of duties that an employee could perform for your organization and an estimate of how many hours a week an employee is needed. If you have input, but cannot make this meeting, please give these ideas to whomever from your CRT will be attending this meeting.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES, INC.
585 SW Sixth Street, Redmond, Oregon 97756 • (503) 548-2013 • Fax (503) 548-6647

RDI

November 2, 1995

TO: Community Response Teams and Rural Futures Forum Graduates

FROM: Lynn Youngbar, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Rural Investment Fund (RIF) and Rural Action Plan (RAP) Outreach Meetings

Active support from many of our rural legislators and your local community response teams resulted in the Rural Investment Fund (RIF), Senate Bill 697, being signed by Governor Kitzhaber on June 1, 1995. The Fund ($ 8,250,000 statewide) will be administered by the Oregon Economic Development Department and will be allocated through the State's 15 Regional Strategies Boards.

The administrative rules were adopted in September 1995, requiring each Regional Strategies Board to develop a Rural Action Plan to ensure that they are reaching out to the more rural areas of their region. Please note that the Rural Investment Fund has its own set of rules, and it is meant to be a very flexible in order to meet some of the unique needs of rural areas that do not always fit the requirements of other funds. It is NOT limited to investment in three targeted industries or any of the other requirements of Regional Strategies.

The following is an excerpt from the administrative rule (ORS 123-045-0020 (3) - (5) which defines the Rural Action Plan:

(3) In developing its Rural Action Plan, Regional Boards shall solicit input and participation of Rural areas and other Rural interests. Boards shall consider the interests of community planning efforts, special districts, Indian tribes, Regional Workforce Quality Committees and other workforce development groups and citizens of Rural areas.

(4) As part of its Rural Action Plan, the Regional Board shall establish a process to evaluate requests for funding and to make decisions on allocation of Rural Investment Funds in accordance with the criteria specified in this Division and consistent with the priorities, performance measurements and economic goals and objectives for the Region as determined by the Regional Board.

(5) Prior to approval of its Rural Action Plan, Regional Boards may dedicate a portion of their allocation from the Rural Investment Fund for Technical Assistance and staff support necessary for development of the Rural Action Plan. Upon approval of the Rural Action Plan, Regional Boards may also commit funds for Technical Assistance to Rural areas consistent with their Rural Action Plan.

RDI and our communities were extremely active and influential in getting the RIF passed into law. This next step of shaping the content of the Rural Action Plan is vitally important if your projects and needs are to be met through the RIF. If your Regional Board has scheduled outreach meetings on the RAP, representatives from your Community Response Team need to attend. If the Board has not scheduled such meetings, you need to make your interest known at Board meetings themselves.

In order to assist your efforts, RDI staff have developed some key points that you may wish to address when providing input regarding the RAP.

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1. We suggest that you request your Regional Strategies Board allocate at least a portion of the funds to the smaller rural communities.

   - Rural Investment Funds are intended for rural Oregon, and particularly the smaller rural communities which have trouble meeting the criteria of other funding sources. However, to give the Regional Boards maximum flexibility in allocating the funds, rural was defined as any area of the state that is not a metropolitan region, i.e., Eugene, Salem, Portland and Medford. This means that Roseburg, Corvallis, Bend, etc., are considered rural. Many of these communities have worthy projects and they are well organized to present their proposals/interests to the Regional Boards. (Obviously, in much of eastern Oregon these distinctions are not an issue, because the entire region is rural, if not frontier.)

   Consequently, for your community's projects to be considered, you need to get involved in this process NOW. Let your Regional Strategies Board know that you want some preference given to rural communities under 10,000 in population and unincorporated rural areas. And, let them know what projects or activities you need funding for to be successful in implementing your strategic plans. These Boards have the discretion and ability to consider your needs, but there will be many more requests for funding than there are funds. So, you need to have your voice heard.

2. Make sure your Regional Strategies Board represents rural communities.

   - Look closely at the Board make-up. If you think the Board does not adequately represent rural interests, request that the RAP address the need for more rural members on the Board. Then, be prepared to nominate qualified representatives from rural areas of your region. For example, do you have members from your CRTs on the Board?

3. Communities with projects identified in community-based strategic plans should be given preference over projects not identified in a strategic plan.

4. Rural communities can submit proposals to fund staff to help develop projects with measurable economic outcomes, write proposals and administer projects where there is no staff help to do this. This is an opportunity to have your project ideas fully developed with enough details to be seriously considered for funding from the Rural Investment Fund.

If you have any questions, or would like to further discuss the Rural Investment Fund or the Rural Action Plan, please do not hesitate to contact your RDI field staff as follows:

Constance Albrecht - 548-2013

Treva Hunter - 673-4909

Jennifer Pratt - 343-6708

Craig Smith - 261-0490

We hope this information will assist you in furthering the community and economic development efforts of rural communities in Oregon.